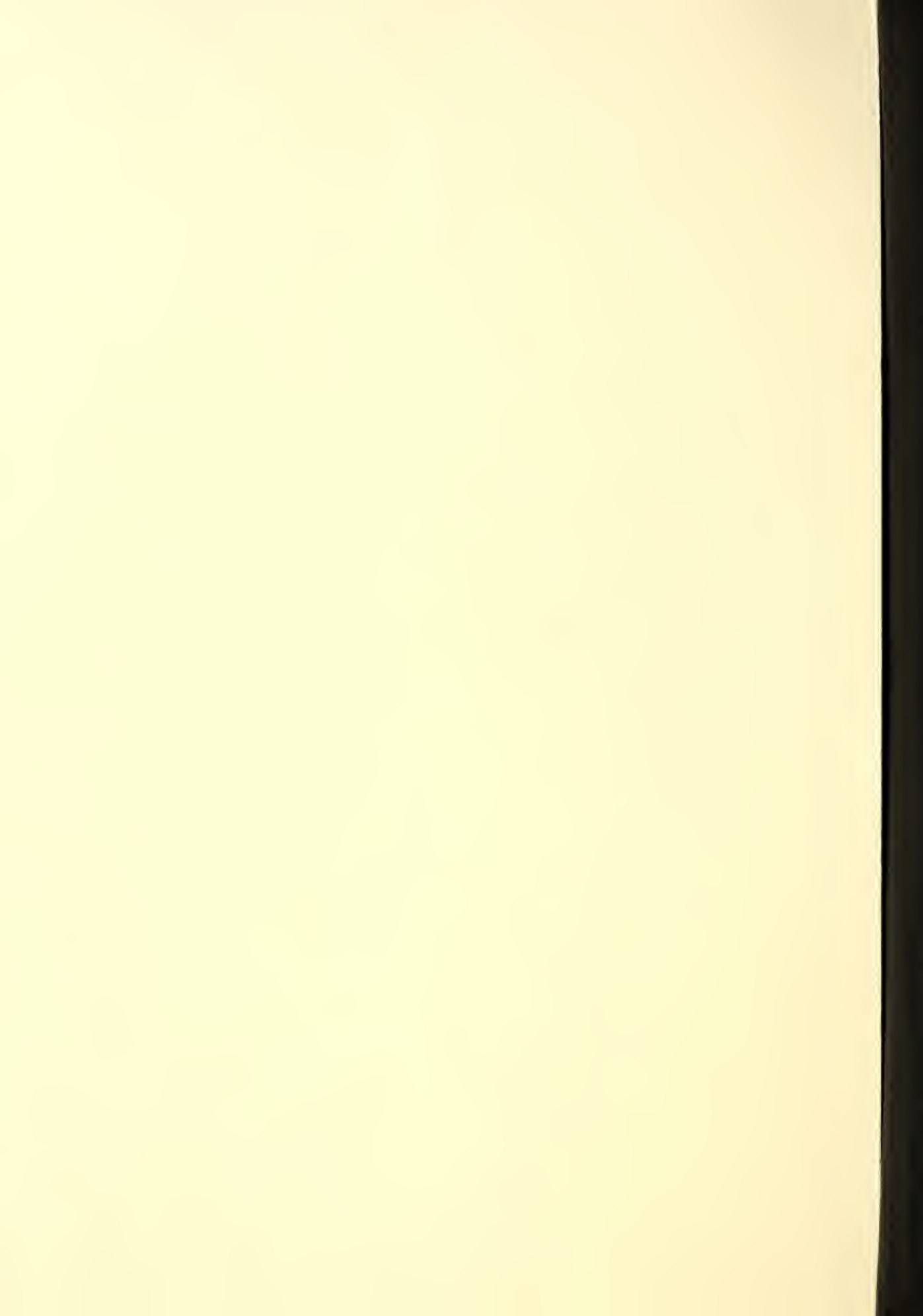


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R E P O R T
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March 24, 1967

Preface

We are indebted to Mary E. Corning, Chief, Publications and Translations Branch, National Library of Medicine, for granting us permission to reproduce and distribute this report within the Department of Agriculture.

The original report was prepared by Miss Corning at the request of Dr. Martin M. Cummings, Director, National Library of Medicine, to acquaint Department of Health, Education, and Welfare personnel with the scope of COSATI's activities. It has been revised only to eliminate certain references to the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare.

Charles W. Mehring
Program Coordinator
National Agricultural Library

COMMITTEE ON SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNICAL INFORMATION
FEDERAL COUNCIL FOR SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Table of Contents

I. Background.	1
II. Organization of COSATI.	2
III. Functions of COSATI	2
IV. Panel Structure of COSATI	4
A. Panel on Operational Techniques and Systems	4
B. Panel on Information Sciences Technology.	5
C. Panel on Education and Training	7
D. Panel on International Information Activities	7
E. Panel on Management of Information Activities	9
F. Panel on Information Analysis and Data Centers.	10
V. Task Group on National Systems.	10
VI. Summary	11

APPENDIX A - Membership Roster for COSATI, its Panels and Task Groups

COMMITTEE ON SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNICAL INFORMATION

FEDERAL COUNCIL FOR SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

The Committee on Scientific and Technical Information (COSATI) has been concerned over the past several years with federal programs and activities in scientific and technical information, and the inter-relationships of the various agencies in the execution of these programs. The Department of Agriculture is not only represented on COSATI, but on a number of COSATI Panels and Task Groups. This report summarizes COSATI activities, both present and projected.

I. BACKGROUND

In 1957, a high level mechanism for providing scientific advice to the President began with the establishment of the position, Special Assistant to the President for Science and Technology, and the elevation of the Science Advisory Committee to the President's Science Advisory Committee (PSAC). PSAC consists of scientists and engineers drawn from the university, industrial, and private sectors.

Based on a recommendation of the President's Science Advisory Committee, the Federal Council for Science and Technology, (FCST) was established in 1959 by Executive Order 10807. The FCST consists of departmental representatives who are of policy rank, and the USDA representative is Assistant Secretary George L. Mehren. The functions of the Council are: (1) to consider problems and developments in the fields of science and technology and related activities affecting more than one Federal Agency, and (2) to recommend policies.

In 1962, the President proposed and Congress concurred in the establishment of the Office of Science and Technology (OST) in the Office of the President. OST was established as a staff arm of the President in "developing policies and evaluating programs in order to assure that science and technology are used most effectively in the interest of national security and general welfare." Thus OST receives advice and assistance from PSAC and the FCST; and the Special Assistant to the President serves as Director of OST, and Chairman of both PSAC and FCST.

In 1962, the FCST established a Committee on Scientific Information (COSI). The charter of this committee was revised and strengthened in 1964 when COSI became COSATI. COSATI is one of some thirteen committees of the Federal Council. Naming a few of these committees illustrates their scope: Academic Science and Engineering;

Atmospheric Sciences; Behavioral Sciences; High Energy Physics; International Committee; Materials Research and Development; Oceanography; Patents; and Water Resources.

II. ORGANIZATION OF COSATI

The organization of COSATI is given in Table I. There are presently eleven agencies represented on COSATI. Recently, the Chairman and Executive Secretary of COSATI have been members of the staff of OST and have not been selected from the member agencies. Foster E. Mohrhardt, Director, National Agricultural Library, is the USDA representative, and James Turnbull, Director, Current Research Information System, RPDES, is the alternate.

COSATI presently has six Panels and three Task Groups. There is presently Departmental representation on four panels, and one of the task groups. Appendix A gives the latest available COSATI Roster listings.

III. FUNCTIONS OF COSATI

The functions of COSATI are stated in terms of objectives and activities.

A. Objectives

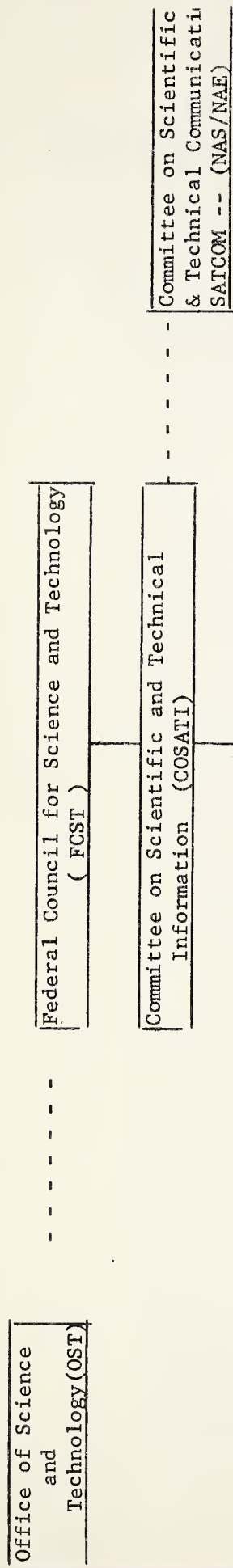
1. Development of a coordinated but decentralized scientific and technical information system for scientists, engineers, and technical professionals.
2. Coordination and cooperation with improved Federal and national systems for handling scientific and technical information.

B. Activities

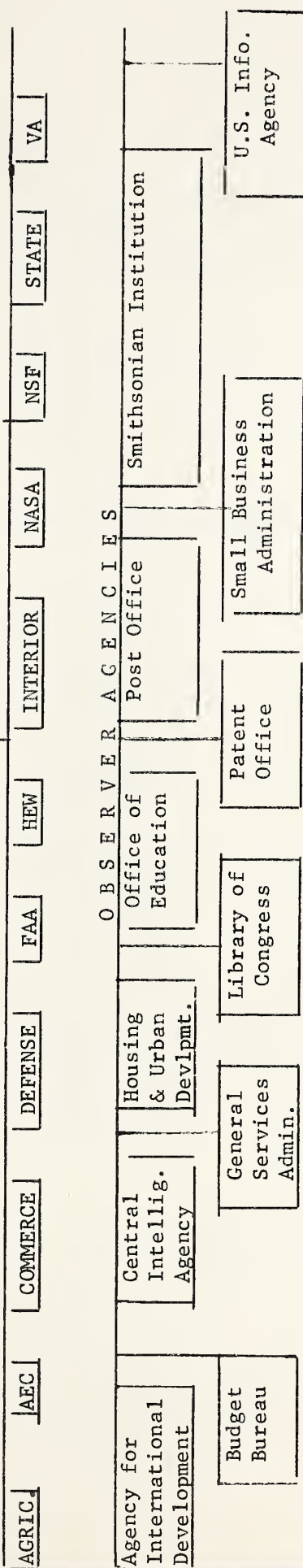
To achieve its objectives, COSATI may engage in the following activities:

1. Review the adequacy and scope of present programs; identify problems and requirements; and devise or review new programs to overcome these problems and to meet the requirements.
2. Recommend standards, methodology, and policies both for systems and management.
3. Identify and recommend assignments of responsibility and resources among the executive agencies.
4. Facilitate interagency coordination at management levels.

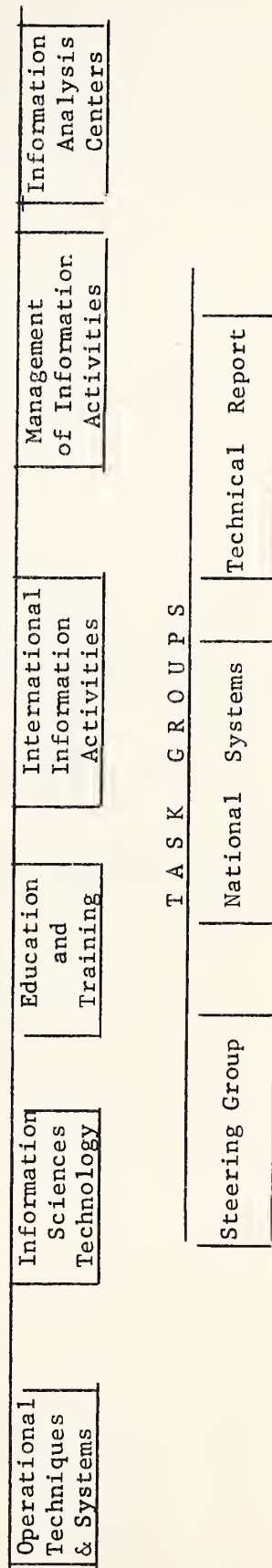
TABLE I - COSATI ORGANIZATION



MEMBER AGENCIES



PANELS



IV. PANEL STRUCTURE OF COSATI

Beginning in June 1965, COSATI established a number of Panels which presently number six. These are:

1. Operational Techniques and Systems
2. Information Sciences Technology
3. Education and Training
4. International Information Activities
5. Management of Information Activities
6. Specialized Information Analysis and Data Centers

A brief review of the charges to these Panels, their past, present and proposed activities follows:

A. Panel on Operational Techniques and Systems

1. Functions

The Panel has been given the following functions:

- a. Identify the needs for improved agency policies, programs, and practices pertaining to scientific and technical information;
- b. Develop and recommend new programs to bring about the desired improvement;
- c. Facilitate more effective overall planning, management, and evaluation of scientific and technical information efforts of the Federal Agencies; and
- d. Recommend new policies and practices to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of operational systems.

The Panel will specifically include in its area of responsibility: acquisition, accession, abstracting, indexing, announcement, publication and reprography, distribution, terminology control, equipment compatibility and convertibility, wholesale and retail resources, specialized information centers, libraries, and depositories.

2. Membership

Membership is drawn from the Atomic Energy Commission, Department of Defense, National Security Agency, Department of Agriculture, Department of Commerce, Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, Department of Interior, Federal Aviation Agency, National Aeronautics and Space Administration, National Science Foundation, and the Veterans Administration with liaison from the Library of Congress. It is presently chaired by H. Edmund Stiles of the National Security Agency and USDA is represented by John Forbes of the National Agricultural Library.

3. Subpanel Working Groups

The Panel Chairman has established a number of Subpanels for the purpose of studying specific problems or performing special projects. Present Subpanels are:

- a. Classification and Indexing
- b. Micromedia
- c. Standardization
- d. Standardization of Descriptive Cataloging
- e. Transfer of Bibliographic Descriptions by Magnetic Tape

4. Publications

Publications produced from these activities are:

- a. COSATI Subject Category List, 1st Edition, Dec. 1964.
- b. Federal Microfiche Standards, 2nd Edition, 1965.
- c. Standard for Descriptive Cataloging of Government Scientific and Technical Reports, Revision No. 1, Oct. 1966.

The standards which have been issued for descriptive cataloging, subject categories for scientific and technical reports, and microfiche are premissive but with the recommendation that they be adopted by those agencies that have common activities.

B. Panel on Information Sciences Technology

1. Functions

The functions of this Panel are to assist the Federal Council in the following areas:

- a. Ensuring of an orderly development of information sciences technology
- b. Avoiding unnecessary duplication of R & D efforts
- c. Identifying and eliminating gaps in technology so as to improve effectiveness of Federal agencies
- d. Insuring an orderly transition from obsolete to improved systems.

2. Membership

Membership is drawn from the Atomic Energy Commission, Central Intelligence Agency, Department of Commerce, Department of Defense, Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, National

Aeronautics and Space Administration, National Science Foundation, and National Security Agency. It is presently chaired by Ruth M. Davis from the Department of Defense. USDA has no representative on this Panel.

3. Activities

The Panel can:

- a. Recommend policies for COSATI and/or FCST to approve which could have impact on all government agencies
- b. Initiate certain projects, particularly prototypes, and recommend continuance of these
- c. Survey gaps in R & D and prepare informative papers, invite guest speakers, form working groups
- d. Answer specific questions posed by COSATI

The Panel has been particularly interested in the area of experimentation with and evaluation of information systems. It sponsored a series of six seminars by guest speakers (Bigelow, Tukey, Swets, Price, Salton, and Havron) in 1966 and is sponsoring two briefings on current evaluation programs (Taulbee and Lancaster) in 1967. It is maintaining close watch on these current evaluations of CIRC and of MEDLARS.

Another effort of the Panel has been the identification and listing of Federally sponsored R & D in information sciences technology. This work culminated in the publication of the COSATI Inventory of Information Sciences Technology Activities of Certain United States Government Agencies (April 1966). It is intended that this inventory be updated annually for the next three years.

Plans are underway to set up an experimental distribution system to circulate summaries of publishable results of research sponsored in the field of information sciences technology.

4. Ad-hoc Special Interest Groups

There are a number of ad-hoc Special Interest Groups, whose function is to review the state-of-the art in various areas, to determine gaps in research and thus to recommend specific problems for further investigation. Special Interest Groups exist on the following topics:

- a. Dissemination of magnetic tapes
- b. Document miniaturization; storage, retrieval, and dissemination of microcopies
- c. Information storage and retrieval research (working currently on file organization)
- d. Techniques and hardware for automated and/or semi-automated input of text
- e. Machine-aided translation centers

C. Panel on Education and Training

1. Functions

This Panel is primarily concerned with:

- a. Stimulation of efforts for the improvement or effectiveness of existing programs for training users and operators of information systems
- b. Contributing to the development of additional programs, both of preservice and inservice type
- c. Special emphasis on orientation and training for Federally employed and supported users of the information systems administered or operated by Federal agencies
- d. Stimulating and coordinating research activities required for developing and evaluating training programs in the area of information science
- e. The dissemination of information about such training programs

2. Membership

The Panel is in a transition stage with the naming of a new Chairman and some new panel members. Dr. Lee Burchinal, Office of Education, has now assumed Chairmanship of this Panel and a report of its activities will be made at a later date. USDA is represented by Kirby B. Payne of the NAL.

D. Panel on International Information Activities

1. Functions

The Panel has the following functions:

- a. Recommend policies and programs for unclassified technical information and data which includes the U. S. distribution of Federally produced information and data and U. S. acquisition of foreign information
- b. Identify, evaluate, and recommend techniques for acquiring, translating, and disseminating foreign-produced information and data
- c. Recommend improved governmental organization for increasing the efficiency of exchange of information and data between the U. S. and other countries
- d. Recommend policies for Federal agencies on role of non-governmental organizations and their support in international information exchange

2. Membership

Membership on the Panel includes representation from Atomic Energy Commission, Department of Agriculture, Department of Defense, Department of Commerce, Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, National Aeronautics and Space Administration, National Science Foundation, and the Department of State. The Panel is chaired by Melvin S. Day of National Aeronautics and Space Administration and the Department of Agriculture is represented by Foster E. Mohrhardt, Director, National Agricultural Library.

3. Activities

International information activities can be examined in terms of the purpose, the channels, or the form of communication. The Panel has been concerned primarily with exchanges on a quid pro quo basis; governmental, bilateral or multi-lateral programs; and information in the form of tapes or the report literature.

4. Accomplishments

The major accomplishment of this Panel has been the development of two major guidance papers, one for the domestic and the other for the foreign dissemination of machine-readable tapes. The Panel has also extended the "responsible agency" concept to foreign information activities. In addition the Panel has provided guidance and action on specific items such as exchange visits and U. S. personnel for international organizations.

1. The first part of the report is a general introduction to the subject of the study. It discusses the importance of the study and the objectives of the research.

2. The second part of the report is a detailed description of the methodology used in the study. It includes information about the sample, the data collection methods, and the statistical analysis.

3. The third part of the report is a presentation of the results of the study. It includes tables, figures, and text describing the findings of the research.

4. The fourth part of the report is a discussion of the results and their implications. It includes a comparison of the findings with previous research and a discussion of the limitations of the study.

5. The fifth part of the report is a conclusion and a list of references. It summarizes the main findings of the study and provides a list of the sources used in the research.

6. The sixth part of the report is a list of appendices. It includes additional information that is relevant to the study but is not included in the main body of the report. This may include raw data, detailed statistical results, or other supporting materials.

7. The seventh part of the report is a list of footnotes. It includes additional information that is relevant to the study but is not included in the main body of the report. This may include references to other works or additional details about the methodology.

8. The eighth part of the report is a list of references. It includes a list of the sources used in the research, including books, articles, and other publications. This list is typically organized alphabetically by the author's name.

5. Current Issues

Issues receiving current attention are:

- a. Proposals of the United Nations Education, Scientific, and Cultural Organization/International Council of Scientific Unions (UNESCO/ICSU) for world scientific and technical information systems
- b. International Nuclear Information System proposals and the relationships of the U. S. Atomic Energy Commission (AEC) with the European Atomic Energy Community (EURATOM), European Nuclear Energy Agency (ENEA) and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)
- c. The role of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) in scientific information
- d. International clearinghouses for report literature
- e. The technological gap between the United States and Europe
- f. The development of international scientific and technical information policies

E. Panel on Management of Information Activities

1. Functions

This Panel was established in November 1966 and its terms of reference are still under refinement but its overall purpose is to undertake studies and make recommendations leading to improvements in the management of Federal agency scientific and technical information programs.

2. Membership

Membership is drawn from the Atomic Energy Commission, Federal Aviation Agency, Veterans Administration, Department of Agriculture, Bureau of Budget, Department of Commerce, National Aeronautics and Space Administration, Department of Defense, Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, National Science Foundation, and Department of the Interior. The Chairman is Colonel Dale Vincent from the Department of Defense and USDA is represented by William A. Carlson of Planning Evaluation & Programming, and Charles W. Mehring of the NAL, is the alternate.

3. Activities

A number of working papers are being prepared for the Panel's study:

- a. Methods for determining percentage of Federal R & D dollar spent on scientific and technical information

- b. What activities are included under scientific information?
- c. What functions are included under scientific information?
- d. What data are available on unit costs for scientific information?
- e. How well do the new library and information specialists standards serve us?

The Department of Health, Education, and Welfare representative has written and submitted a paper on item (d).

One of the first projects of the Panel is a joint study for obtaining comparable cost data on technical reports. The Department of Health, Education, and Welfare will participate through ERIC and an Office of Education representative is being named.

F. Panel on Information Analysis and Data Centers

This Panel is in the process of being established. The Chairman is Dr. Edward L. Brady of the National Bureau of Standards. The terms of reference are under discussion.

V. TASK GROUP ON NATIONAL SYSTEMS FOR SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNICAL INFORMATION

In addition to the Panels, COSATI also establishes task groups to concentrate on identified topics. Such topics have been the journal literature, a science newspaper, and currently the technical report literature. One of the most active task groups is that concerned with National Systems for Scientific and Technical Information.

A. Functions

The functions of this task group are to undertake investigations to:

1. Inventory and evaluate resources (people, libraries, services, equipment, materials, and funds) currently utilized in national and other domestic scientific and technical information activities
2. Ascertain the information needs of users both in and out of government
3. Prepare recommendations and plans for the development of

National information system(s) to include:

- a. Actions for government
- b. Suggestions for actions by private sector
- c. Steps to move from current to advanced information systems

B. Activities

In 1964, the task group commissioned a study by the Systems Development Corporation. This report "Recommendations for National Document Handling Systems in Science and Technology" was issued in November, 1965. One significant aspect of this report was the recommendation that there be a "capping agency" to coordinate the activities of the various Federal agencies and to direct other activities not assigned to an agency. The Office of Science and Technology (OST) is presently exploring ways to implement this concept.

The second study initiated by this task group is on "A System Study of Abstracting and Indexing in the United States." This report is now being made available for comment.

Future concerns of the task group are reflected in new efforts in data handling systems, and in oral and informal communications.

VI. SUMMARY

The purpose of this report has been to acquaint Departmental Officers with the scope of COSATI and OST interest and their actual involvement in the scientific and technical information activities of the Federal government. The participation of USDA personnel in these groups is important both to provide technical expertise and to constitute a channel for communication between operating and policy levels.

Future reports on COSATI activities will be made to the Department whenever overall policy or operating issues are under consideration.

APPENDIX A

MEMBERSHIP ROSTER FOR COSATI, ITS PANELS AND TASK GROUPS

COMMITTEE ON SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNICAL INFORMATION (COSATI)	PAGE 1
COSATI AD HOC STEERING GROUP	4
TASK GROUP ON NATIONAL SYSTEMS FOR SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNICAL INFORMATION	5
PANEL ON OPERATIONAL TECHNIQUES AND SYSTEMS	6
SUBPANEL ON CLASSIFICATION AND INDEXING	8
SUBPANEL ON MICROMEDIA	9
SUBPANEL ON STANDARDIZATION	10
SUBPANEL ON STANDARDIZATION OF DESCRIPTIVE CATALOGING	11
SUBPANEL ON TRANSFER OF BIBLIOGRAPHIC DESCRIPTION BY MAGNETIC TAPE	12
PANEL ON INFORMATION SCIENCES TECHNOLOGY	13
PANEL ON EDUCATION AND TRAINING	15
PANEL ON INTERNATIONAL INFORMATION ACTIVITIES	16
PANEL ON MANAGEMENT OF INFORMATION ACTIVITIES	17
PANEL ON INFORMATION ANALYSIS AND DATA CENTERS	19
TASK GROUP ON THE ROLE OF THE TECHNICAL REPORT	20

COMMITTEE ON SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNICAL INFORMATION (COSATI)

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(Dec. 1966)

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TASK GROUP ON NATIONAL SYSTEMS FOR SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNICAL INFORMATION

ACTING

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PANEL ON OPERATIONAL TECHNIQUES AND SYSTEMS

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MR. TERRY GILLUM

PROJECT LEX

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PROJECT LEX

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Department of the Navy, DOD

PANEL ON OPERATIONAL TECHNIQUES AND SYSTEMS

SUBPANEL ON MICROMEDIA

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MR. JOHN T. SIMONS
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